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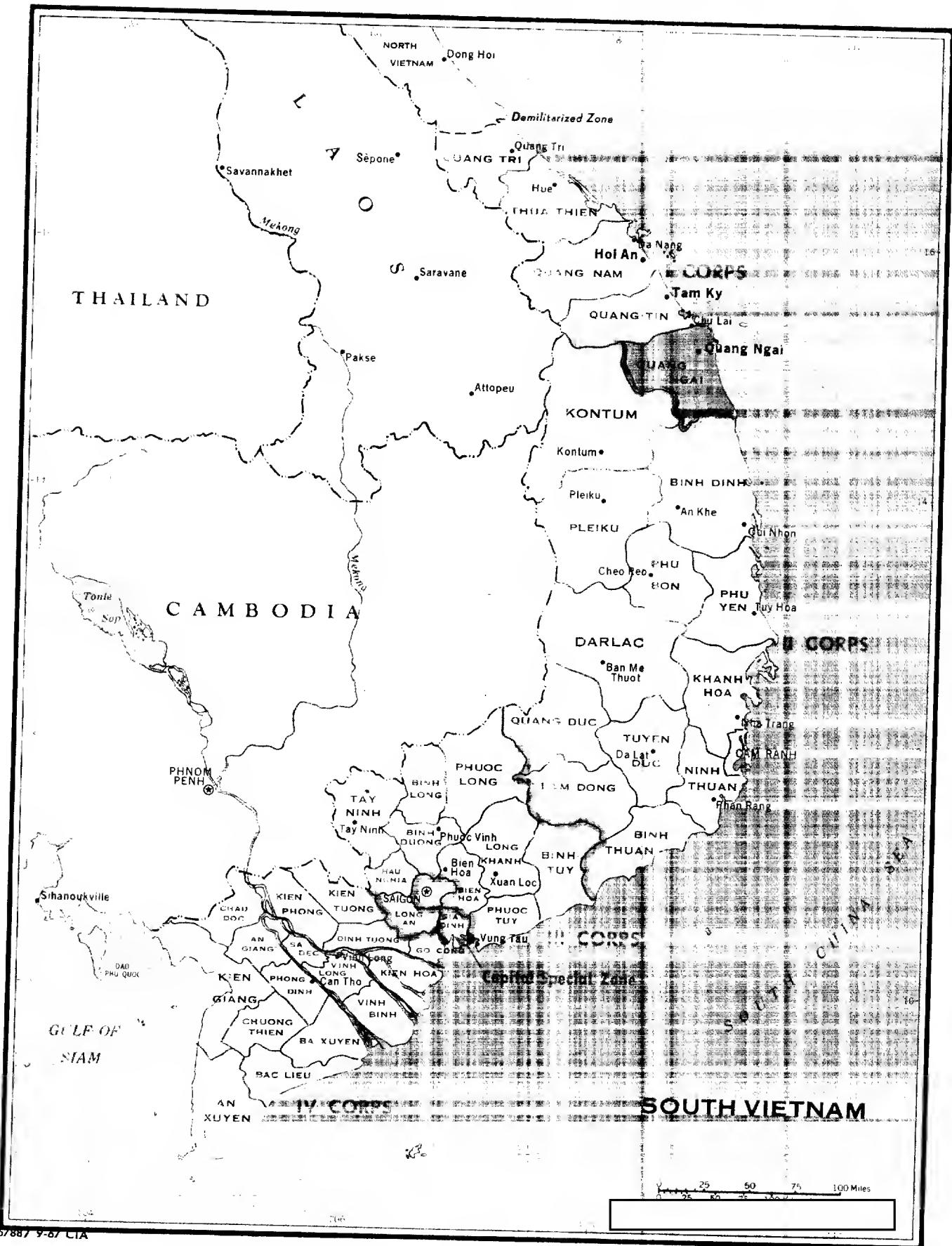
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*South Vietnam: Two defeated presidential candidates are publicly attacking the government's conduct in the recent election but apparently do not expect to make their charges stick.

Ha Thuc Ky and Phan Khac Suu have both stated that they lack firm evidence of irregularities and that any official protest they lodge will probably be futile. Similar comments have been made to the press by runner-up Truong Dinh Dzu.

Thus far, only two specific election complaints have been filed. One, by an individual citizen, charges ballot fraud; the other by Phan Khac Suu, concerns false allegations by a Saigon newspaper and is not directly related to fraud at the polls.

Both Suu and Ha Thuc Ky have said that they believe the government rigged the election against them and Tran Van Huong and even went so far as to favor Truong Dinh Dzu as runner-up. They claim that this was done either by withholding ballots bearing their names or by manipulating vote tallies.

On the other hand, Nguyen Van Kieu, the brother of the president-elect, has indicated that he and Thieu are concerned over the possible sources of Dzu's support in the election.

Kieu hinted that, because of the particular provinces Dzu carried and the sums of money he spent, Dzu may have received support from the Viet Cong. There have been scattered reports from the delta provinces and the area northwest of Saigon that the Communists were urging voters to back Dzu's "peace" ticket, but evidence of any collusion between Dzu and the Viet Cong is lacking.

On 5 September a large Communist force attacked Tam Ky, the capital of Quang Tin, and the provincial jail located there. The attack, like earlier incursions

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against the cities of Quang Ngai and Hoi An, was well planned and included a number of diversionary attacks against posts on the outskirts of the city. Aided by timely air support, local defenders turned back the attackers, killed 136 and suffered only nine dead.

Communist forces in this area have conducted recently a number of raids on provincial and district towns, partly to free Communists held in government prisons. Presumably, these trained personnel can be immediately put to use in local Viet Cong political and military organizations.

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Cambodia: Prince Sihanouk has taken another important step in his campaign against the Cambodian left.

He announced on 3 September that the Cambodian-Chinese Friendship Association would be dissolved because it had become the tool of Peking-leaning Cambodian leftists. The Cambodian head of the association quit last June in protest over what he regarded as Peking's subversive activities.

Sihanouk also indicated that the government would take more forceful measures against future leftist demonstrations in Phnom Penh.

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Although Sihanouk again took pains to underline Phnom Penh's continuing "friendship" for Peking, he went further than ever before in tying Peking to the Cambodian left. He also implied it was not surprising that the Chinese had used the leftists to promote China's own interests.

Sihanouk may have been disappointed by the outcome of the Cambodian foreign minister's recent trip to Peking which was undertaken in order to seek curtailment of Peking's political campaign in Cambodia.

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Soviet Union: The Soviets have offered a compromise on the safeguards provision of the nonproliferation treaty which could break a major impasse at Geneva.

The proposal represents a marked departure from earlier Soviet insistence on an exclusive role for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in policing the treaty. It goes some way toward accommodating the special interests of members of EURATOM, which operates the safeguards system of the Common Market countries.

Although not mentioning EURATOM as such, the compromise would allow the member countries up to two years after the treaty took effect to work out safeguards arrangements with the IAEA. It might also make possible the use of EURATOM to verify compliance with the treaty. The Soviet proposal incorporates the substance of the US position, taken at the request of its allies, that these arrangements should not hamper economic or technological development or international co-operation, including "international exchange of nuclear material and equipment."

The EURATOM states, while welcoming the Soviet concession, are likely to respond cautiously. They will recognize that the full implications of "verification" will only become clear in the course of negotiations with the IAEA. Moreover, there is considerable doubt within EURATOM about how far the French are willing to go in permitting EURATOM to negotiate with the IAEA.

The Soviets are also professing optimism on the question of security assurances to nonnuclear countries--another hurdle to be surmounted. Although a common position has not yet been worked out, Soviet delegates told the US this week that security assurances "would not be a difficult issue between the US and USSR."

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NOTES

Latin America: The ministerial meeting of the Latin American Free Trade Association has ended with no agreement on major issues. The conference's proposal to eliminate tariffs gradually against products of less developed countries was scuttled at the last minute. The delegates were also unable to agree on a mechanism for cutting tariffs automatically. No substantial progress was made toward establishing a Latin American common market, and further negotiations will be necessary.

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